

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINR PINT YO
SUBJ: SRZENTIC TO HEAD MONTENEGRIN PARTY

1. ON MAR 21 VOJO SRZENTIC, A YOUNG CAREER POLITICIAN, WAS ELECTED TO REPLACE VESELIN DJURANOVIC AS PRESIDENT OF THE MONTENEGRIN CENTRAL COMMITTEE, THE TOP POSITION IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY. SRZENTIC HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN A SECRETARY ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FEDERAL LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS. DJURANOVIC HAS REPLACED THE LATE DJEMAL BIJEDIC AS PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

2. SRZENTIC HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN POLITICS SINCE STUDENT DAYS. HE WAS BORN ON JUNE 21, 1934, IN SOTONICI NEAR BAR IN MONTENEGRO AND WAS TOO YOUNG TO FIGHT AS A PARTISAN. HE COMPLETED THE ECONOMIC FACULTY OF BELGRADE UNIVERSITY IN 1958. THERE HE WAS PRESIDENT OF THE FACULTY'S STUDENT ORGANIZATION, A MEMBER OF ITS LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS' COMMITTEE, AND A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE OF THE STUDENT FEDERATION. HE JOINED THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS IN 1954.

3. AFTER GRADUATION HE RETURNED TO MONTENEGRO AND CONTINUED HIS POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE YOUTH LEAGUE. HE BECAME A MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENCY OF THE YOUTH LEAGUE

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OF MONTENEGRO IN 1958 AND IN 1960 BECAME THE PRESIDENT OF ITS CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND A MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENCY OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE. AT THE SAME TIME HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MAIN COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE OF MONTENEGRO.

4. IN 1963 HE MADE THE JUMP FROM THE YOUTH LEAGUE TO

GOVT AND PARTY JOBS. HE WAS CHOSEN AS A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE REPUBLICAN CHAMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY OF MONTENEGRO, WHERE HE SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PLAN, FINANCES AND BUDGET. HE WAS AT THE SAME TIME PRESIDENT OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMISSION AND A MEMBER OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL-POLITICAL SECRETARIAT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS OF MONTENEGRO. FROM AUGUST, 1964 TO THE END OF 1966 HE WAS PRESIDENT OF THE BAR COMMUNAL ASSEMBLY.

5. MOVING HIGHER IN THE PARTY, IN 1965 HE WAS ELECTED A MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS OF MONTENEGRO AND OF ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. IN 1969 HE BECAME THE SECRETARY OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE MONTENEGRIN CENTRAL COMMITTEE; HE MOVED TO THE FEDERAL LEVEL IN 1974 WHEN THE NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS ELEVATED HIM TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, THE NATIONAL CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. THERE HAS BEEN NO ANNOUNCEMENT OF A SUCCESSOR TO SRZENTIC ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

6. COMMENT: WHILE HE LOOKS OLDER, AT 43 SRZENTIC IS ONE OF THE YOUNGEST YUGOSLAV LEADERS. ALTHOUGH FORMALLY ELECTED BY THE MONTENEGRIN CENTRAL COMMITTEE, THE DECISION TO CHOOSE HIM WAS APPARENTLY TAKEN AT TITO'S MARCH 18 MEETING WITH THE MONTENEGRIN LEADERSHIP IN HERCEG NOVI. SRZENTIC'S CAREER IS SIMILAR TO THAT OF MANY YUGOSLAV LEADERS -- A SUCCESSION OF OFFICES IN HIS NATIVE REPUBLIC AND A FORAY INTO NATIONAL POLITICS IN BELGRADE. HE IS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOWEVER, TOO YOUNG TO HAVE BEEN A PARTISAN. AS A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE LC SRZENTIC WORKED UNDER STANE DOLANC, BUT HIS PRIMARY LOYALTIES ARE PROBABLY TO HIS FELLOW MONTENEGRINS AND PARTICULARLY VELJKO MILATOVIC, THE PRESIDENT OF THE MONTENEGRIN PRESIDENCY AND THE RECOGNIZED "BOSS" OF THE REPUBLIC. SRZENTIC RECEIVED LITTLE PRESS COVERAGE WHILE ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND MAY HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY INACTIVE. YORK

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